

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OCT 16 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lihue Post Office

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 4441 Rice Street N/A ☐ not for publication
city, town Lihue N/A ☐ vicinity
state Hawaii code HT county Kauai code 007 zip code 96766

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☒ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Hawaii State Historic Preservation Officer Date JAN 28 1990

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of comment or other official U.S. Postal Service Date 10/5/89

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Linda McClelland 11/28/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals
Mission

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Tile

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Lihue Main Post Office is a one-story reinforced concrete building on a slightly raised concrete slab foundation. Divided into three sections, the front facade consists of a central salient with three bays, and flanking wings with one window bay in each. Bridging the projecting lower portion and recessed gable end of the central section is an overhanging shed roof clad with mission tile. A tile-clad gable roof covers the central section while the stepped-down wings are covered by tile-clad shed roofs. Although the building received an addition to the rear in the late-1970s and the original open bays of the front and west side have been enclosed with glass, the original facades of the building are essentially intact.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade of the Mediterranean-style building faces Rice Street which forms the site's northern boundary. Symmetrically-arranged, the front facade is articulated both vertically and horizontally. The central section consists of a lower portion (corresponding to the lobby) which projects four feet beyond the flanking wings and an upper portion which is recessed thirteen feet behind the wings. A red mission tile shed roof, which overhangs the three central bays, rises rearward to the recessed gable end of the upper portion. The gable end as well as the shed-roofed wings are flat, white-painted concrete. A narrow, molded cornice and the exposed edge of the roof tiles terminate the gable end while the tile edges terminate the flanking wings. Extending four feet beyond the side walls are the exposed concrete outlookers of the shed roofs. The rounded ends of the outlookers are exposed beneath the roof of the central section.

Three equally-sized bays divide the lower portion of the central salient: an entry bay and flanking window bays. (Note: As originally constructed, these bays were open and

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☒ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Politics/government

Art

Period of Significance

1900-1941

Significant Dates

Site acq.-1937

Const.-1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Louis A. Simon, Supervising Arch-
itect/Federal government

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Lihue Main Post Office is a well-preserved example of a small single-purpose post office. Although expanded in the late-1970s, the building's original facade maintains good integrity and represents its period of construction. The Mission Revival design is well-executed and, along with the Spanish Colonial mode, dominated the stylistic preference of the federal government for post offices and other public buildings in Hawaii. The building symbolizes the recognition of Lihue by the federal government as well as the link between the local citizens and far-off Washington. It is particularly significant that local citizens were able to convince Uncle Sam's architects to change the design from that originally proposed. In fact, the design served as a prototype for the 1940 Schofield Barracks Station (Honolulu), the only other post office constructed in Hawaii during the Depression era. Finally, the building contains two art works by a notable regional artist: the only such works in a post office in Hawaii. For these reasons the building is exceptionally significant at both the local and state levels.

ARCHITECTURE

The Spanish Mission-style design of the Lihue Post Office is an adaptation of a standard federal design to meet the specific climatic conditions of Hawaii. Originally planned as a standard Neo-Classical building that was common to the mainland during the Depression era, the design, through the efforts of local citizens, was altered to be more consistent with the local setting. Unlike the larger and earlier federal buildings in Hilo (1917) and Honolulu (1922), which were designed by private architectural firms, the Lihue and the multitude of small town post offices on the mainland

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

USPS Facilities Service Center
San Bruno, CA 94099-0330

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.56

UTM References

A

0	4	4	6	1	6	1	0	2	4	3	0	4	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Quadrangle name: Lihue

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The site is on the southeast corner of Rice and Kele Streets and is described as follows: beginning at the northwest corner of said site, thence east along Rice Street 150', thence southeasterly 181.73', thence west 125', thence north along Kele Street 180' to point of beginning.

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property originally purchased by the federal government for the post office site.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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all served as entries.) Two square concrete columns divide the three bays. Painted white with red bases, the columns are unadorned except for beveled corners. Concrete lintels (implied) span the bays between flat capitals which top the columns. The glass-enclosed central entry bay is recessed to form a vestibule and provides lateral access to the lobby. One aluminum-framed, single-light door is at each side of the entry vestibule. Except for an additional tier of glass, the entry enclosure is identical to the window bays: fixed, vertically-paired, aluminum sash (bronze anodized) with six lights (smoked glass) each. One concrete step and a concrete landing provide access to the entry. Concrete cheek blocks with round ends flank the step and landing at the corners of the central section. Octagonal bronze lanterns, affixed to the wall, are aligned above the cheek blocks. Centered in the gable end, above the shed roof, is a circular opening covered by bronze louvers. Below the louvers, in 8" bronze letters is "United States Post Office Lihue Hawaii."

The end wings are identical to each other in size and configuration. They are flat concrete, painted red from grade to the top of the foundation slab and white to the sloping edge of the tile roof. In each wing is a single window bay. The bay of the east wing consists of a two-section bronze-sash casement window with five horizontal lights in each side. A slightly recessed concrete panel is set between the sill and foundation slab. Corresponding to the bays of the central section, a slightly recessed concrete lintel is set above the sash. The bay of the west wing, which was originally open, has been enclosed by an aluminum-framed single-glass light. The opening extends from the top of the slab to a recessed lintel. (The original bronze railing has been retained on the interior side of the window.)

The west side, facing Kele Street, consists of the original facade (with slight alterations) and the rear addition. The original portion of the facade consists of six bays: an entry bay flanked on each side by two window bays (all same size) and a small window bay near the rear. The entry bay is open and unframed except for a slightly recessed lintel. A concrete ramp with painted metal railings along the edges provides access to the entry (originally approached by one step to a concrete landing). The window bays are enclosed by fixed aluminum-framed (bronze-anodized) smoked

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glass in two vertical sections. (Note: Three of these bays were originally open with bronze railings (retained) in the lower portion. The fourth, was originally a smaller, casement window identical to that of the east wing of the front.) The rear bay contains a casement window set within a niche identical in size to the other bays. It consists of bronze sash with three lights in each section. (Originally, this window was identical to that of the front east wing.)

The facade wall of the wing is flat concrete, painted red to the top of the foundation slab and white to the overhanging eaves. Covering the wing is a red mission tile roof which inclines to the raised central section of the building. Extending two feet above the roof juncture, the wall is also concrete and painted white. Four equally-spaced horizontal vents (with bronze louvers) are set in the wall, which is terminated by a narrow molded cornice. A gable roof, clad with red mission tile which projects only slightly over the cornice, covers the central section.

The addition extends from the rear of the originally recessed central section (location of original loading dock) and beyond the ends of the original side wings. Opening to the west is a concrete loading dock which is enclosed by plain concrete walls on the sides and a flat tar composition roof. This enclosure extends west beyond the eave line of the original building (approximately one foot). Since the interior side of the dock enclosure abuts the rear of the original building, the overhang of the original roof was truncated to align with the addition. The roof line of the dock rises slightly above this juncture. Inward from the dock and extending above it is the west wall of the expanded workroom. Aligned with the wall of the original central section, this wall rises to top of the shed roof. The wall is white-painted concrete in which four equally-space horizontal vents have been set.

The east side also consists of the original facade and rear addition. The addition, also stepped back, extends on the same planes as the original wing and central section. The height of the lower portion corresponds to the eave line of the original and that of the upper portion corresponds to the top of the shed roof. The addition is white-painted concrete with no openings except for a single metal door in the

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lower portion and four louvered horizontal vents in the upper portion. The original facade is identical to that of the west side except for the window arrangement. Six equally-spaced niches, each with a window bay, divide the facade. All of the windows, except the second from the front, are two-section bronze sash casement with five horizontal lights in each side. The other window consists of a single section with four horizontal lights. All have concrete sills with a recessed concrete panel beneath.

The rear facade is plain white-painted concrete. The side wings are stepped-down from the central section, the east side slightly lower than the west. A copper gutter defines the top of the east side and copper parapet caps define the tops of the west side and central section. Flat, built-up tar composition roofs cover all three sections.

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were designed by the staff of the Office of the Supervising Architect directed by Louis A. Simon. During the Depression era, standardized designs and simplified buildings became the rule of federal architecture. Economy and rapidity with the intent of stimulating the depressed economy did not, however, abrogate the philosophy of sound, quality construction.

The exterior design of the building is derived from the Southern California experience. In the West, California was the primary recipient of the Spanish-influenced designs. The open porticos, overhanging eaves with exposed rafters, white stucco walls, red tile roofs, and open ventilation ports are characteristic of this style. Yet, the Classical influence of federal design tradition is also evident in the symmetry and proportion: the formality is maintained.

Although the design of the building is attributed to Floyd M. Williams, Postal Engineer, there is no evidence to confirm this. The original floor plans list as architect, Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect. No other architect is listed as would be the case had a specific architect developed the plans. Based on local newspaper accounts, Mr. Williams did, however, influence the choice of design. Apparently, his experience in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands enabled him to effect the change requested by citizens of Lihue. The design is similar to previously-constructed post offices in Southern California and was most probably adapted from these. The design, as perhaps a prototype for Hawaii, was used in essentially the same form for the Schofield Barracks Station of the Honolulu Post Office in 1940.

With respect to local construction the building followed the trend that had been established by the 1871 Kamehameha V Post Office in Honolulu and the 1912 Bank of Hawaii in Lihue. The Kamehameha V Post Office, was not only the first building built as a post office in Hawaii, but was also the first public building in the United States to be constructed entirely of concrete. Built of concrete block and iron bar-reinforced structural concrete, this building established the model for future public and commercial buildings in the Islands. The Bank of Hawaii was the first concrete building in Lihue. This was followed by other prominent public buildings which also made partial or total use of reinforced concrete. These include the County Building (1913, Neo-Classical,

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concrete); the Kaua'i Museum (built in 1924 as a library, Neo-Classical with Hawaiian influence, concrete and stone); County Building Annex (1934, Spanish Mission, reinforced concrete); and County Courthouse (1939, Spanish Mission, reinforced concrete).

As decades of use of the Lihue Post Office demonstrated, the original design was not entirely successful. The open lobby, in response to the climate, was altered in response to the reality of the climate. Rain, carried by winds from the west and north, entered the original lanai openings of the west and north facades. As a result, they are now glass-enclosed. Further, the original design did not anticipate the growth of the community; consequently an addition was constructed in the late-1970s. Neither of these adaptations, however, significantly affect the original design integrity of the building which is significant under Criterion C.

In plan, the interior is quite similar to the multitude of small town post offices on the mainland. The 'L'-shaped lobby in which patrons conduct postal business at the counter and receive their mail from the post office boxes is typical. Also typical are the Postmaster's office at the end of the lobby, the adjacent restroom and vault, and the workroom, employee facilities, inspector's lookout, and loading platform that comprise the rear of the building. These spaces are designed to meet the functional requirements of post office operations.

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

The Lihue Post Office was the first and only federally-constructed post office in either Lihue or on the island of Kauai. It is also one of several buildings of the period which represent various aspects of government in Lihue. These include the Kauai County Building (1913), the Territorial Office Building (1930 - now the County Building Annex), and the County Courthouse (1938). All of these buildings are in the Lihue Civic Center Complex and, for a short while, there was discussion of also including the post office there. However, the siting of the post office and the courthouse in the park area in front of the County Building met with strong objection from civic groups. As a result, alternative sites were provided.

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The construction of the Lihue Post Office symbolized the federal presence and the recognition that Lihue was a stable community and important regional center. Further, the building represents the link between the local community and its Territorial representatives in Washington D.C. In Lihue's case that link proved to be more productive than for the typical community that received a federal post office during the era. Not only were local civic groups, though their representatives, able to gain a federal appropriation, but they were also able to influence the design of their building. After ten years of effort to secure a federal post office for Lihue, local businessmen and the Chamber of Commerce were dismayed when they received the plans of the building from Delegate Sam King in June of 1937. Termed a "cracker box" with a flat roof and storm doors which would be appropriate in a North Dakota town, the building was felt to be totally inconsistent with the climate of Lihue. After encountering resistance from federal officials in Washington, the locals found an ally in Floyd M. Williams, a postal engineer with construction experience in tropical climes. With Williams' assistance, the diligent lobbying efforts finally achieved success when the beautiful tropical style building was completed in 1939. An editorial in the May 9, 1939 issue of The Garden Island summed up the local efforts:

THE NEW LIHUE POST OFFICE

The dedication of the Lihue Post Office last Saturday marks the completion of twelve years of effort to secure a new Post Office for Lihue. The original move was made in 1927 when Senator Rice introduced a resolution in the Territorial senate memorializing Congress to appropriate funds for the building.

It was not until ten years later that the final appropriation was secured. Then came a setback in the form of the design of the building. The building designed was a stereotyped form which probably would have fitted nicely into a farming community in the Middle West. It certainly had no place in a tropical setting. To the credit of Kauai it refused to accept the monstrosity offered, and made a stern protest to Washington. It appeared for a time as if Kauai would be unable to get past Washington bureaucracy, as our protest fell on deaf ears. It was not until Floyd Williams, Postal Engineer with the Post Office Department visited

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Kauai, after the bids had been opened, that Kauai was able to get any action. Williams halted the awarding of the contract and had new plans drawn. The present beautiful building is the result of these efforts.

It can truthfully be said that the efforts of twelve years have been worthwhile.

Finally, the Lihue Post Office is only one of two post offices constructed by the federal government in Hawaii during the Depression era. It is a legacy of the massive federal public works programs that were intended to aid local economies during the Depression. Although Hawaii did not appear to suffer the magnitude of unemployment as the mainland, all of the counties, with the exception of Honolulu which experienced relatively substantial growth, slightly declined in population during the 1930s. Lihue, however, experienced a slight population gain and appeared to be relatively prosperous during this period.

As a legacy of the federal government's public building programs of the Depression era, a symbolic link between the federal government and the local community, and Kauai's first and only federally-constructed post office, the building is significant under Criterion A.

ART

The lobby of the post office contains two carved wood sculptures in low relief. One sculpture is attached to the wall over the Postmaster's door and depicts a raised Koi (adze) with two hands clutching its shaft (approximately 3' by 3'). The other, attached to the wall in the box lobby, depicts a man holding a conch shell to his mouth, perhaps preparing to blow into it (approximately 4' by 7').

The works are attributed to Marguerite Louis Blasingame of Honolulu. She was born in Honolulu on February 2, 1906, attended the University of Hawaii, art school in California and received a Master's degree from Stanford University. She exhibited and received prizes in the Honolulu Annual in 1933, 1934, and 1936. Her primary work was in fresco and carving, both wood and stone. Her architectural installations include stone carvings in Ala Moana Park, a fountain at the Kawanana-koa School, the old water supply building, and the Volcano House Hotel; wood carvings at the Library of Hawaii, and the

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Church of the Crossroads; and a fresco at the Waikiki Theater. The Denver Art Museum acquired a carved wood panel. Ms. Blasingame died while traveling in Mexico in 1947.

Her work is described as follows:

Mrs. Blasingames's style is modern yet individual and spontaneous. She has followed the old Hawaiian carvings with the result of achieving the stylization of the old Hawaiians combined with more realism which is made possible with the use of modern tools. Her work reveals familiarity with and understanding of her subjects.
[Schulz, 1942]

The works in the Lihue MPO are not in the standard listing of WPA arts projects (no works are listed for Hawaii). One source indicates that they were donated to and installed in the Post Office in the 1950s. (This has not been possible to verify.) But, a Garden Island article of 24 June 1941 announced a Section of Fine Arts competition for two sculpted relief panels for the Schofield Barracks and Lihue post offices. (No follow-up articles were located (through 1944)).

LOCAL CONTEXT

Lihue, approximately 1.5 miles inland from Nawiliwili Bay on Kauai's east coast, is the Kauai County seat. Lihue is the island's governmental and transportation center and also provides local retail and financial services.

The origin of Lihue dates back to the late-1830s when Kaikioewa, Kauai's governor, moved from Waimea to the area overlooking Nawiliwili Bay, between the settlements of Nawiliwili and Hanamaulu. Here he built a thatch house and church, and founded a sugar cane plantation. In 1849, the plantation, which had languished after Kaikioewa's death, was revitalized as Lihue Plantation by H. A. Pierce, C. R. Bishop and W. L. Lee. By 1850, the wood frame plantation store, was in operation in Koamalu. The store also served as the area's main meeting place, with the storekeeper serving as postmaster and distributing the irregular inter-island mail.

A frame courthouse was built in 1851. In 1854 the Rice family bought into the Lihue Plantation; they eventually came to control it. Since lumber was scarce, the Lihue store was

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dragged on rollers by a team of oxen to the present site of Lihue Shopping Center (across from Post Office) in 1876. Thus, Lihue, with its plantation store and courthouse, served as the center of island government. According to 1878 population statistics, Kauai County had a population of 5,811 and the Lihue District had a population of 1,832.

As the plantation store moved and expanded to new buildings, successive storekeepers continued to act as postmaster. After annexation of Hawaii in 1898, however, a tailor shop next to the Lihue store became the first U.S. Post Office. Frank Crawford came from Indiana to serve as Lihue's first U.S. postmaster in 1901. Two years later, Crawford was named cashier of the Bank of Hawaii.

In 1905 the Territorial government passed the County Act, establishing county governments on Hawaii's four largest islands. Lihue became the county seat of Kauai. In 1912 Lihue's first concrete building, the Bank of Hawaii, was built. This was followed in 1913 by the new concrete Lihue store complex and the County Building, also of concrete; the large, expensive, and durable buildings reflected the community's increased importance. In 1915 the post office moved to the new Tip Top Building (also concrete) and Lihue was transitioning from the center of Lihue Plantation operations to a modern town. By 1920, the Lihue District had a population of 6,223 as compared with 4,951 in 1910. When the deepwater harbor at Nawiliwili was dedicated in 1930, Lihue became established as the transportation center of Kauai. In that year, the Lihue town population was separated from Lihue District for the first time. Its population totaled 2,399 out of a population of 7,515 for the district and 35,942 for Kauai County. The sugar industry also prospered during the 1920s and 1930s and the area surrounding the County Building developed as a government center with the construction of the Territorial Office Building in 1930.

During the 1930s, Lihue became the largest town on Kauai. The Lihue Theater, with its elaborate Spanish Colonial facade of concrete, was completed in 1931. The concrete Van Hamm-Young building was opened in 1936. The years 1938 and 1939 brought a new \$100,000 Kress Building, the new G.N. Wilcox Memorial Hospital, a new armory, the Royal Theater, the Circuit Court Building, other commercial projects and the Lihue Post Office. The Lihue Mill set a new production

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record of 83,839 tons and Lihue's population reached 4,254 in 1940. The population of Kauai, however, declined to 35,818. After 1940, both Kauai's and Lihue's population declined to lows of 28,176 and 6,297, respectively in 1960. Thereafter, the populations have increased.

The Lihue Post Office is on the southeast corner of Rice Street and Kele Street. The Bank of Hawaii is west of the Post Office, across Kele Street. Across Rice Street to the north is the Lihue Shopping Center (1964) and the Kauai Museum (originally A.S. Wilcox Memorial Library, concrete and stone, 1924, NHR). East of the Post Office is the First Hawaiian Bank Building with the intervening bank parking lot. South of the Post Office is a parking lot, the Lihue Credit Union Building and the Lihue Plantation Company Office Building.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LIHUE MAIN POST OFFICE

In the spring of 1935 Lihue's newspaper The Garden Island reported that six FERA projects were employing 119 men at the area's roads, parks, cemeteries, and airport (April 23rd article). In addition, a CCC camp for 100 men was planned for Kokee, Kauai was to receive an outright grant of \$240,000 for roads as part of a federal aid project, and after 15 months of labor the Port Allen breakwater (an \$880,000 PWA project) was to be completed (articles of April 20th, May 22nd, and June 4th). It was also reported that Martin Dreier had been nominated by President Roosevelt as Lihue's postmaster (March 12th).

"New Federal Building Possible If Land Given Without Cost" reported the Garden Island on April 16th. A wire had been received from Delegate Samuel Wilder King and the issue was being investigated by the Board of Supervisors. On August 27th it was reported that a federal engineer was in Lihue regarding a federal highway project and the selection of a site for a new \$50,000 federal courthouse for Lihue. And on September 3rd it was announced that local airmail had increased 30%, the Supervisors had pledged \$86,000 for a school building program, and an application was being submitted for a new \$63,000 PWA Port Allen Pier.

On May 12th, 1936 it was reported that, after a delay in

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allotment of PWA funds, both the courthouse and pier would be built in Lihue that year. "Federal Post Office Building in Lihue Assured Wednesday" announced the Garden Island on July 7th. Delegate Sam King had wired that federal funds were available under the recent deficiency bill and the granting of a free site would expedite matters; as a result the Board of Supervisors had moved to deed a site to the federal government. On July 28th it was reported that the offers for the post office site had been opened: only one site, a parcel of over 30,000 square feet at the corner of the main road at Lihue and Kalena Drive had been offered by Wm. Hyde Rice, Ltd., for \$15,000. It was understood though, that the Lihue Plantation might make the offer of property adjacent to the Bank of Hawaii. Two weeks later, as reported on September 15th, the offer was received in the amount of \$4,500. It was also the site recommended by the Treasury Department. Even though the site was recommended, and \$60,000 to \$70,000 was available, it was not expected that construction would begin for 8 to 10 months. Apparently, there was still discussion about putting both the Post Office and Federal Court on the open area in front of the County Building. The Chamber of Commerce, however, disapproved of these plans, since it felt the area would become too congested.

On October 20th, the Garden Island published a plan for a "Proposed Lihue Civic Center" as suggested by the Kauai Chamber of Commerce. The map indicated the location of the proposed Post Office next to the Bank of Hawaii, the proposed courthouse behind the County and Territorial buildings, and a new road bordering the east side of the County complex. Another article that day noted that a preliminary survey of the post office site was being made by Herbert C. Cayton, construction engineer employed by the Treasury Department.

In early 1937 it was reported that a bill had been introduced for a new \$40,000 National Guard Armory in Lihue, Lihue had been selected as site of a \$125,000 Kress store, and a \$200,000 hospital was also planned for the town. (articles of March 2nd, 23rd, and June 1st). On June 15th, Lihue's citizens were given a preview of their future post office when a preliminary sketch was published in the Garden Island. The clearing of the three houses on the site was underway. The former Lihue Store manager's house which had been occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Sherman, and the houses formerly occupied by Judge Hjorth and Edward DeLacy were being re-

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moved. Meanwhile, the sketch of the proposed building had set in motion an undercurrent of community activism.

The undercurrent surfaced and the September 14th headline of the Garden Island announced "Lihue Post Office Contract Withdrawn; New Plans to Be Made." The citizens of Lihue felt that the building was "not at all in keeping with the climate and setting of Kauai." The paper noted that the "lobby of the post office was closed with a vestibule and storm door." The Chamber of Commerce, after receiving the plans from Delegate Sam King, had protested and recommended changes, including "an open lanai for the post office boxes as well as other features which would be of more value in the tropics." Officials in Washington, however, had declined to change the plans, evidently because they felt delay was not desired. Floyd M. Williams, postal engineer, however, had recommended drawing new plans after consultation with local businessmen and Kauai Chamber of Commerce officials. It was reported that: "When Williams discovered that local sentiment strongly favored changes in the structure and that the delay would be preferred to the type of building planned, he immediately wired Washington...." It was also noted that Williams had recently done much to "solve the traffic and parking problems at the post office when it is completed."

The Honolulu Star Bulletin also reported on the design controversy on September 14th, noting that "Original plans called for a flat roof building of "cracker box" style." Federal officials were being "sent to the territory for the purpose of investigating the Kauai complaints and also to study the types of postoffice buildings which should be erected in Hawaii." It had been noted that flat roofs, for example, were "difficult to maintain in periods of heavy rains such as Lihue sometimes experiences"; it was expected that the new design would follow "the accepted style of Hawaii architecture."

On April 12th, 1938 the Garden Island published a sketch of the revised post office design. On July 5th it reported that E. E. Black's bid of \$57,730 had been the lowest of the eight submitted for construction of the post office. And on October 11th it was reported that construction had begun the previous week.

(An article of August 2nd, 1938 reported that Kauai's

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population had increased 1,619 since 1937, to 39,914. The population of the Territory was now 411,485; 79.76 of the population were American citizens.)

"Post Office Dedication Postponed" reported the Garden Island on April 18th, 1939. The date had been postponed from April 22nd to Saturday May 6th at 4:30 to enable Floyd Williams to attend the dedication. The paper reported:

It was through Williams' efforts that the original design of the post office was changed to the present beautiful building. The original design was a square box-like affair with enclosed lobby, and was typical of a post office for some North Dakota town rather than for the tropics.

The dedication program was announced on May 2nd. The program was to include Floyd Williams as guest of honor, Postmaster Martin Dreier, former postmasters from the area, Senator Charles A. Rice and other government officials, the Kauai Community Orchestra, and the Boy and Cub Scouts. A metal container was to be placed in the cornerstone, containing a copy of that week's Garden Island, the dedication program, a photograph of Delegate Sam King, and a photograph of the present staff of the Lihue Post Office.

On May 9th it was reported that "a large crowd of interested spectators" had attended the dedication, which had been sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. Master of Ceremonies Charles J. Fern told "the history of the fight to obtain a Federal post office for Kauai," noting that in 1927 Senator Charles A. Rice introduced the first resolution requesting a post office and that he introduced it thereafter in each succeeding session. Delegate Samuel King obtained the \$58,000 construction grant in 1937. Judge Wood, U.S. Postal Inspector for Hawaii, gave the main address in the place of Floyd Williams, who was unable to catch the plane to Kauai after arriving from the mainland on Saturday morning. Wood gave a history of postal service and also announced that the design of the Lihue post office would be used for the construction of two new post offices to be built in the Territory. Other speakers included Dora R. Isenberg, whose father was postmaster in the 1870s, who "told how she used to climb a tree to look for the sailing vessels as they came to bring the mail to Kauai, an event for which all the town turned

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out." The public was invited to inspect the building following the dedication.

DEVELOPMENT OF HAWAIIAN POSTAL SERVICE

On April 4th, 1820 the first missionaries arrived in Hawaii. The early missionaries and traders sent letters to America with the captains of sailing vessels, who turned them over to the post office when reaching port (and where they received 2 cents per letter for their efforts). Virtually all letters were sent collect, and reached the U.S. at an Atlantic port since there were no towns on the Pacific coast to put the letters into the mail. Mail arriving in Hawaii was distributed rather haphazardly at the harbormaster's office or at the counting room of the consignees of the vessel. Early mail service was informal.

Indeed, until the 1830s the Hawaiian Kingdom was governed with little legal structure. In 1839, however, a Bill of Rights was proposed and signed by King Kamehameha III and a year later he conferred a constitution on the Hawaiian people. And in 1845 and 1846 three important laws, commonly referred to as the "organic acts," were passed to secure civil liberties for the Hawaiian people and to organize the Hawaiian government. The 4th article of the Second Act (April 27th, 1846), entitled "An Act to Organize the Executive Departments of the Hawaiian Islands," included the first mention of the Post Office. The regulations it contained provided for the establishment of a postal system in Hawaii, related to inter-island mails. It identified the Collector General Customs and collectors of ports of entry and departure as ex officio postmasters, entitled to receive and open mail bags at their ports. It also stated that:

The Ministry of the Interior shall appoint some trustworthy and discreet person, residing conveniently on each of the islands where no port of entry and departure is established, to be postmaster thereof.

Within a few years significant improvements in mail service both in the United States and Hawaii were made. In 1849 the San Francisco Post Office was opened (on April 3rd) and "Ocean Mail" via Panama was begun. Two steamers began a monthly service between San Francisco and Panama, leaving San Francisco with eastbound mail to Panama and returning with

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west-bound mail, brought to Panama by connecting steamers on the Atlantic, to San Francisco. (The crossing of the Isthmus of Panama was made on foot until the completion of the Panama Railroad in 1855.) The improvement during 1851-1852 of mail service between San Francisco and New York also led to improved Honolulu service. The voyage between the Islands and San Francisco by sailing vessels took 12 to 14 days.

On August 9th, 1850 a treaty between the U.S. and Hawaii was ratified, which among other things provided for the exchange of mail between the two countries--the first definite arrangement for the exchange of mail. Before long the Hawaiian government decided that the 1846 statute governing internal correspondence was inadequate to handle foreign mails. As a result, on December 20, 1850, through a decree of the Privy Council, a Post Office in Honolulu was established. Henry M. Whitney, a prominent merchant and printer, was appointed to the newly established office of Postmaster (previous to this, the Collector of Customs performed the duties of postmaster). Whitney, who served until 1856, took charge of mail leaving for San Francisco and other foreign ports; all foreign mail was routed through Honolulu. Mail was distributed through the general delivery window or rented mail boxes; there was no service by a carrier.

When the Hawaii Post Office was established in 1850 rates for a letter of less than half an ounce were 10 cents, newspapers were 2 cents, and pamphlets were 2-1/2 cents. The first postage stamps, "The Missionaries," were issued on October 1, 1851. Inter-island mails, however, were handled free of charge. Ships were required to carry mail between the islands without compensation. But service was haphazard. The free inter-island mail was one of the early problems and controversies of the Post Office. It was argued, particularly by the missionaries, that the free mails encouraged native correspondence, and thus reading, writing, and education. But it was also argued, for example by Postmaster J. Jackson who succeeded Whitney in 1856, that requiring ships to carry mail without compensation resulted in undependable delivery. In 1859 the legislature adopted post rates for inter-island mail.

Hawaii's early, primitive mail service continued to evolve. In 1854 the legislature passed an act "authorizing the appointment of mail carriers in the remote districts of

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the Kingdom." The legislature did not, however, appropriate any funds to carry out the law. Instead, the islands were to implement the act with any surplus money from police appropriations. Only the island of Hawaii had a surplus, and, as a result, in 1854 the first mail route in the Islands was established, from Kawaihae to Hilo through Hamakua.

As discussed, inter-island mail was carried without charge until 1859. After August 1, 1859 a basic rate of 2 cents was charged for letters. The responsibility of dispensing stamps and handling the mails was allocated to various districts on each of the five main islands. On Kauai, for example, there were five districts with designated postmasters and they included Hanalei, Anaholo, Nawiliwili, Koloa and Waimea.

The first permanent post office in Honolulu was on Government ground in a building called the "Honolulu Hale," which housed government offices until 1854. (Prior to this, the post office was "for the time being" in the Polynesian Office (government newspaper) as provided by the decree creating the Hawaii Post Office.) Adjoining the post office was postmaster Henry M. Whitney's stationary store. In 1870 the post office building at Merchant and Bethel Streets was built. The post office remained in the same cramped building until May 1st, 1922 when it moved to the new Federal Building, facing Palace Square.

Initially, both inter-island mail and foreign mail was sent by sailing vessels. The introduction of steam communication in 1862 did much to improve the dependability and regularity of mail service to and between the Islands. In 1866 the United States Post Office Department contracted with the Pacific Mail Steamship Co., to handle mails, on a monthly basis, to China and Japan. (Previous to this, no ships had mail-carrying contracts and the ship captains charged a set amount per letter for conveyance.) The contract required that stops be made at Honolulu each way, and would take effect in 1867 (regular trips began in 1868). In 1867 the California, Oregon and Mexico Steamship Co. was contracted to run 12 round trips per year between San Francisco and Honolulu. The line was paid a subsidy of \$75,000 a year to carry all mail offered by the postmasters of Honolulu and San Francisco. Other ships, however, also continued to handle mail.

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Within the Islands, the number of mail routes and carriers also increased. The increase in internal mails was the result of both the more regular service, through the use of steam ships, as well as the increase in daily, weekly, and monthly publications (these publications could still be received free of postage through the domestic mails).

On July 1, 1870 the first formal postal treaty between the Kingdom of Hawaii and the United States went into operation. Article II of the Treaty read:

San Francisco, New York, Boston, Portland, Oregon, Teakelet, Olympia, and Port Townsend shall be the United States offices of exchange, and Honolulu and Hilo the Hawaiian offices of exchange, for all mails transmitted between the two countries under this arrangement.

The Treaty remained in effect until Hawaii's admission to the Universal Postal Union, on January 1, 1882.

On August 12th, 1898 the Republic of Hawaii was annexed to the United States. Even then, however, the stamps of Hawaii remained in use, until Hawaii's actual incorporation into the United States, on June 14, 1900. At that time the postal service of Hawaii was superceded by that of the United States.

FEDERAL PUBLIC BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

This section will provide only a discussion of national building programs. A following section will be devoted to the relationship of these programs in the context of the buildings constructed in Hawaii.

The history of post offices construction before WWII can be divided into three distinct phases. From 1893 to 1914, under the provisions of the Tarsney Act, buildings could be designed within the Treasury Department or submitted to competitive bids among private architects. From 1915 to 1930, the Secretary of the Treasury implemented policies that standardized the design of public buildings, in contrast to the previous practice of preparing an individual design for each structure. From the onset of the Depression (1929 to 1930) a new era of government buildings was initiated with

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the development of public works programs designed to stimulate local economies.

Prior to 1902, when the first "Public Buildings Omnibus Act" was passed, federal buildings were funded on an ad hoc basis. Appropriations bills rarely contained allocations for more than three buildings at one time. Acquisition of sites and construction occurred only with Congressional authorization.

The Public Buildings Omnibus Act of 1902 authorized 150 new projects. Since it provided for a large body of projects rather than requiring individual authorization, it saved a considerable amount of time in Congress. However, the omnibus bills created the opportunity for political abuse in that Congressmen were eager to please their constituents by distributing "federal presents." Political influence, rather than operational requirements, seemed to dictate size, ornamentation, and location. The omnibus legislation provoked allegations of waste and cries of "pork barrel" from the press.

The utilization of the omnibus buildings approach greatly increased the number of buildings under the control of the Treasury Department. In 1899 there were 391 federal buildings under the Department of the Treasury; this number increased to 1,126 by 1912. [Craig, 1979, p. 213] Many of the new buildings went to smaller cities and developing towns, which received their first federal buildings.

After experimenting with submitting smaller projects (less than \$500,000) to competing architects in the project vicinity in 1903-04, it was decided that these projects would be designed "in-house" by the Supervising Architect's office. A return to the "classical style of architecture" for government buildings was also announced during this period. Stylistic elements were drawn from the French Beaux-Arts and Neo-Classical traditions. In addition, America's architectural heritage was reflected in Colonial Revival design.

During the tenure of Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor (1898-1912), buildings were individually designed. Toward the end of his tenure (1912), concern was expressed that the costs of federal construction in comparison to privately constructed commercial buildings was too high. It was

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felt that designs should be standardized. Taylor felt, however, that government buildings could not be designed and constructed as standardized units.

After Taylor resigned as Supervising Architect, James Wetmore served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1912 to 1913. Oscar Wenderoth followed Wetmore from 1913 to 1915. During Wenderoth's tenure, legislative changes took place that profoundly affected government architecture, particularly small-scale projects. However, the designs of 1913 and 1914 differed little from Taylor's. Post offices designed during Wenderoth's administration, through the use of ornamentation, symmetry, and fine materials (using Renaissance Revival details), brought the idea of the Beaux-Arts movement to small cities and towns. "They (small town post offices) are generally the most important of local buildings, and taken together, are seen daily by thousands, who have little opportunity to feel the influence of the great architectural works in the large cities." [The Architect, Vol. XV, No. 23, March 1918, p. 188.]

The Omnibus Public Buildings Act of 1913 set the stage for a change in federal construction policy. Although the Act authorized a large number of construction projects, it also stipulated that no new post office buildings would be authorized for communities with postal receipts totaling less than \$10,000. Pressure to control "wasteful spending" on unneeded public buildings also led to the establishment of the Public Buildings Commission in the 1913 Act.

In his annual report for fiscal year 1913, the Supervising Architect seemed somewhat skeptical of the commission's ability to render assistance. He hoped, however, that the commission would discuss thoroughly:

"... the two mooted questions of the so-called 'standardization of buildings' and the claim that the public buildings erected under the direction of the Supervising Architect cost appreciably more than similar buildings erected by municipalities, by county and state governments, and by private individuals. The reports of the debates in the House and Senate show that there is great diversity of opinion among members of Congress on these two subjects, and that they are matters of frequent discussion. It is believed that it is due this office that

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Congress be authoritatively informed of the limitations of the scheme of 'standardization' and, also, whether the Supervising Architect is actually to be charged with fostering extravagant methods of building construction." [Annual Report of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, for Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1913", Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914]

The Public Buildings Commission, chaired by Secretary of the Treasury William McAdoo, presented its report to Congress in 1914. The report strongly recommended that buildings be standardized in order to reduce cost. The was followed by the establishment of four building classes and building criteria in McAdoo's annual report of 1915. The purpose of the classification scheme was "to provide a rational system of uniformity and business economy in designing and constructing public buildings, so that buildings suitable to the public needs may be built without waste of government money." [Ibid., p. 9] The result of this report was the complete reshaping of post office construction policies after 1915. Buildings were to be less costly but durable, simple, and architecturally desirable. The policies of standardizing plans and constructing cost-efficient public buildings continued throughout the 1920s. An effort was made to use the same design as frequently as possible, with variation in floor plans only if an unusual, specific need arose.

The classification scheme developed by the committee is as follows:

- * CLASS A:
Definition: Buildings that include a post office of the first class with annual receipts of \$800,000 or over; the site forming part of a city development plan or situated on an important thoroughfare of a great city; improvement on an adjoining property reaching the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.

Character of Building: Marble or granite facing; fireproof throughout; metal frames, sashes, and doors, interior finish to include the finer grade of marble, ornamental bronze work, mahogany, etc. Public spaces to have monumental treatment, mural decorations; special interior lighting fixtures.

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- * **CLASS B:**
Definition: Buildings that include a post office of the first class with receipts from \$60,000 to \$800,000; valuation of adjoining property somewhat below the higher valuation of metropolitan real estate.
- Character of Building: Limestone or sandstone facing; exterior frames and sash metal; interior frames, sash and doors wood; interior finish to exclude the more expensive woods and marbles; ornamental metal to be used only where iron is suitable. Restricted ornament in public spaces.
- * **CLASS C:**
Definition: Buildings that include a post office of the second class with receipts of \$15,000 or over, and of the first class to \$60,000 receipts; valuation of surrounding property that of a second class city.
- Character of Building: Brick facing with stone or terra cotta trimmings; fireproof floors; non-fireproof roof; frames, sashes and doors wood; interior finish to exclude the more expensive woods and marbles; the latter used only where sanitary conditions demand; public spaces restricted to very simple forms of ornament.
- * **CLASS D:**
Definition: Buildings that include a post office having annual receipts of less than \$15,000; real estate values justifying only a limited investment for improvements.
- Character of Building: Brick facing, little stone or terra cotta used; only first floor fireproof; stock sash frames, doors, etc., where advisable; ordinary class of building, such as any business man would consider a reasonable investment in a small town.

James A. Wetmore resumed the reins of the Supervising Architect in 1915 and retained the title of Acting Supervising Architect. Wetmore was a lawyer by training and was concerned more with administration than the design of buildings. During his administration the Superintendent of the Architectural Division, Louis A. Simon, exercised considerable influence on the design of federal buildings. After 1914, designs became standardized and ornament less lavish.

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Construction of public buildings had tapered off with the onset of WWI and came to a halt during the war. After the war ended, construction of previously authorized buildings resumed slowly. For example, 20 buildings were constructed in 1919, 10 in 1920, 3 each in 1921 and 1922, 9 in 1923, and 13 in 1924. No new construction laws were enacted until the Public Buildings Act of 1926. This Act contrasted with previous omnibus acts which had authorized appropriations for specific buildings. Two public buildings commissions--one for the District of Columbia and the other for the rest of the country--recommended a new building program which would base building location and size on a business approach rather than Congressional logrolling. The 1926 Act ordered the Treasury Department to implement a "business considerations" policy in response to protests over unneeded projects that were merely a means for a Congressman to win local favor. The standardization of plans for small post offices was also carried forward from the policies of the Public Buildings Commission's report of 1914. A survey report completed under the direction of the 1926 Act identified over 2,300 towns and cities with postal receipts over \$10,000 that were without federal buildings. The estimated cost of constructing these buildings was \$170,420,000. [Ibid., p. 13]

The policies of standardizing plans and constructing cost-efficient buildings continued throughout the 1920s. Post offices, particularly those in small communities, were constructed in so far as possible according to plans established in conformance with conditions and community needs. Stylistically, the majority retained the basic elements of Beaux-Arts massing and plan. Classical details were minimized (to reduce costs) and floor plans did not vary unless a specific need arose.

The crash of 1929 and the subsequent Depression delayed the full implementation of the building program outlined in the 1926 Act. In 1930, Congress authorized increased funding for public building by amending the 1926 Act. This legislation established a trend in public works projects that arose in direct response to the Depression. It served as a precedent for subsequent policies and acts that would attempt to reduce unemployment and stabilize the economy.

The Federal Employment Stabilization Act of 1931 was a major step in the government's efforts to aid the national

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economy through building programs. The Act established the Federal Employment Stabilization Board, which was charged with advising the President as to the trend of the economic and employment situation. [46 Stat 1086] The President would then transmit to Congress "such supplemental estimates as he deems advisable for emergency appropriations to be expended during such period upon authorized construction in order to aid in preventing unemployment and permit the Government to avail itself of the opportunity for speedy, efficient, and economical construction during any such period." Emergency appropriations were to be used, among other things, for carrying into effect the provision of the Public Buildings Act of 1926. The Act also provided for acceleration of emergency construction, advanced planning, and increased appropriations by \$100,000,000.

Design policies also continued to stress standardization. A set of "Cabinet Sketches" was produced by the Treasury Department which provided standard floor plans for post offices of different sizes. Where practicable, individual treatment was given to exterior details. In order to achieve rapid construction, emphasis was placed on minimizing the number of individual drawings.

In 1933 the Treasury Department was reorganized and the Supervising Architect's office was placed within the Procurement Branch in the Division of Public Works. Also in 1933 the Public Works Administration (PWA) was created under the National Industrial Recovery Act and additional legislation was passed for funding new projects through emergency construction programs. The funds appropriated under the 1926 Act became unavailable, except for those projects under contract. In 1934 Louis A. Simon became the Supervising Architect, a position he held until 1941. He became responsible, therefore, for carrying out the bulk of federal construction through the balance of the Depression era.

The proliferation of federal building programs increased the bureaucratic complexity of federal construction. The Treasury Department's annual report of 1935, for example, listed construction projects under the following programs: the original Public Buildings Program under the 1926 Act; Public Works Administration projects; the Emergency Relief Construction Program; and the Building Program for the District of Columbia under the 1926 Act. [Ibid., p. 17]

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A large portion of the program consisted of small post office buildings spread over the entire United States. Type designs were developed and, in order to meet the varying requirements of the Post Office Department and the sectional architectural traditions, eleven designs were required. By thus standardizing the designs, there resulted a great saving in time and cost of production of the drawings and specifications and the placing of these projects on the market was greatly expedited. The buildings which have been constructed from these type designs have proved economical and satisfactory.

The policy of preparing drawings and specifications permitting to the greatest practicable extent the use of materials and products native to the localities has resulted in stimulating employment and spreading the benefits of the building program.

In 1935, 185 post offices were constructed by the federal government. This number was followed by 260 in 1936, 303 in 1937, and 259 in 1938.

Under Government Reorganization in 1939, the Public Buildings Branch of the Procurement Division was placed under the administration of the Federal Works Agency. The Supervising Architect was also consolidated under the FWA. The Public Buildings Administration, headed by a commissioner of public buildings, was charged with the responsibility of administering these functions. It appears that the post office construction policies remained substantially the same as under the previous organization.

The architectural styles of the Depression Era, particularly after 1933, tended toward modernized, simplified buildings. The buildings retained the symmetry and proportions of their predecessors but were stripped of the architectural ornamentation that characterized the pre-1920 buildings and even those of the first three years of the 1930's. The design was a basic rectangular box with flat facade; and detailing suggested Classical elements, but in rudimentary form. In addition to the various Revival influences, Art Deco was used but even this motif worked with stylized Classical elements. However, these buildings were still of quality construction, using brick, stone, and terra cotta, and they continued to symbolize the stability of the federal

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government.

The quest for efficiency of plan preparation and rapid construction, and the influence of the international or modern design movement created a building that is termed "starved classical". The end of the Depression Era also brought the end to this building type. Construction essentially stopped during World War II and the post offices which followed were designed to meet the changing operational functions of modern postal facilities.

FEDERAL ARTS PROJECTS

Like the accelerated post office construction of the Depression Era, the New Deal Federal Art Projects were developed to alleviate unemployment in the arts and to decorate federal architecture. Three programs were administered through the Treasury Department and one through the Works Progress Administration. [The New Deal Art Projects: An Anthology of Memoirs, O'Connor, 1972, p. 12]. These programs were as follows:

Treasury Department Programs

1. The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), which lasted from December of 1933 to June of 1934. This was an emergency relief program applied without a strict relief test. It employed roughly 3,700 artists and cost \$1,313,000.
2. The Section of Painting and Sculpture, later the Section of Fine Arts. This was the program primarily responsible for murals and sculpture found in post office buildings throughout the country. Commissions were awarded based on anonymous competitions without reference to the artists' economic need, i.e., it was not, strictly speaking, a relief program. The program began in October of 1934, the final commission was completed in 1943. There were 1,400 contracts awarded at a total cost of about \$2,571,000.
3. Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP) was created in July of 1935 by a funding allocation from the WPA to the Treasury Department. TRAP was administered by

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the Section of Fine Arts, applying the same relief rules that governed WPA employment. The project employed 446 persons at a cost of \$833,784; it was discontinued in 1939. The project's primary output was painting and sculpture used to decorate federal buildings.

Work Progress Administration

4. Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP) was a large relief project devoted to the plastic arts. The WPA/FAP was part of a larger program called Federal Project No. 1, which included the WPA drama, music, and writing projects. The over-all project began in August of 1935, employed over 4,000 persons, cost \$35 million, and was terminated in 1943.

In decorating its new public buildings, the Treasury Department supported the arts in the manner of the traditional patron. The Department selected both artists and subject matter in the process of conveying the ideals of the New Deal to the public users of its facilities. In accomplishing that task, the Section of Fine Arts made it clear what was considered as appropriate style and subject matter for its programs. Literal interpretation of the American scene, particularly events that were representative of the communities in which they occurred, was the essence of that appropriate style. Though some artists felt that this standard was repressive, many critics praised the Section for bringing art out of studios and museums into public buildings, some in towns where people had never seen original works of art.

The themes portrayed in the local buildings expressed the experiences, history, and ideals of the local communities, so their artistic significance varied with the local context. The style was conservative and realistic, one that was identifiable and did not require an art critic's interpretation to be appreciated by the local populace; it was a style that could be related to. The mural art and the public buildings in which it was located provided the link between the federal government in its New Deal programs, and the local citizen.

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FEDERAL POST OFFICE CONSTRUCTION IN HAWAII

Hawaii is unique in the United States for having the first and only government post office constructed under a kingdom. Constructed during the reign of Kamehameha V, the building was first appropriated by the Hawaiian legislature in 1868 and occupied on March 21, 1871. Indeed, the tin box laid behind the cornerstone on March 2, 1871 contained, among other things, a photo of His Majesty. The two-story Classical building with its delicately-proportioned Tuscan portico was the first building in Hawaii to be constructed entirely of concrete. The use of this material was lauded by the Hawaiian Gazette which pointed out, in an article of May 8, 1872, other fine buildings which followed the precedent set by the Post Office.

In the census of 1900, the year the territory was officially established, Hawaii had a population of 154,001, of which 74.5% lived in rural areas. (Note: at this time only Honolulu had an established statistical boundary. Hilo's boundary was set in 1911, for the 1910 census tabulation, and the boundaries of other urban places were not set until the 1930 census.) The city of Honolulu, Hawaii's largest city, had a population of 39,306. Hilo District (north and south), on the island of Hawaii, had a population of 19,785 and contained the territory's second largest city. The districts of Wailuku on Maui and Waimea on Kauai were the largest population centers in their counties.

The demands for postal service in Hawaii were growing. The Honolulu Post Office was overcrowded and the conditions in Hilo were worse. In early 1900, the Council of State passed Bill No. 4 which provided \$15,000 for improvements in the Honolulu Post Office and \$22,000 for a new post office and custom house in Hilo. Although the Honolulu Post Office came under the administration of the U.S. Post Office Department on June 14, 1900, it was not until May 1903 that it was formally transferred to the U.S. Government. For this reason the funding was appropriated locally rather than by the federal government. An article of July 2, 1900 in the P.C. Advertiser, captioned "Hilo's Post Office," highlighted the urgent necessity for a new building. The article lamented that Inspector A. C. Hall of the Postoffice Department, while visiting both areas, saw the immediate necessity of granting the funds for the Honolulu expansion. Even

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though Hall felt the situation in Hilo to be even worse than in Honolulu, he doubted that the \$22,000 for Hilo would be available. In hometown journalistic fashion the article questioned Hall's statements:

In that the people of Hilo will take issue, and justly. Why one item in an appropriation will hold good and not another should be made known by the Government and as that appropriation of the Hilo postoffice was to continue until December 31, 1901, the reason for its unavailability can hardly be given. The Government owns the lot adjoining the present postoffice and it owns the land for several blocks above, so that there is no really great obstacle in the way.... It may be that the business men, by petitioning the Government, can secure action at once. The Herald is of opinion that nothing can be had without the asking and now is the time to speak. -- Hawaii Herald."

In any case the two-story addition to the Honolulu Post Office was completed later in the year at a cost of \$13,000. (The original building had cost \$28,362.94.) The citizens of Hilo would wait through various governmental acts and seventeen more years before their federal building opened its doors. The first act undertaken to provide for a Hilo federal building was an act of June 19, 1906 which set aside for governmental purposes certain ground for a public building. It also provided that the superintendent of public works of the Territory of Hawaii sell or dispose of whatever buildings were on that site. [32 Stat. 302]

The first appropriation for a federally-constructed post office in Hawaii was made in the Omnibus Public Buildings Act of June 30, 1906. The limited size of the King Kamehameha V Post Office and the need for federal offices--housed in the overcrowded Iolani Palace--led to the efforts by Sanford B. Dole and subsequent Territorial governors to obtain a new federal building. The initial appropriation of \$150,000 was, however, for only a site. [34 Stat. 782] The Public Buildings Omnibus Act of May 30, 1908 provided the next of several authorizations and appropriations that would be granted before the building was completed. An amount of \$100,000 was authorized for the purpose of beginning the construction of a suitable and commodious fireproof building for a post office, customs house and court house provided

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that the cost limit, exclusive of the site, not exceed \$850,000. [35 Stat. 541] In a separate act, a deficiency appropriation of \$30,000 was granted to the Office of Supervising Architect for the project. [35 Stat. 490] The Sundry Civil Expenses Act of March 4, 1909 appropriated another \$150,000 for continuation of the project. [35 Stat. 951]

After a decade in Territorial status the population of Hawaii had increased to 191,874. Honolulu's population climbed to 52,183 and Hilo, for the first time defined with city boundaries, had a population of 6,745. The districts of Wailuku on Maui and Waimea on Kauai continued to lead their counties with populations of 11,742 and 8,195, respectively. In addition to the federal activities involving the proposed federal buildings at Honolulu and Hilo, the military development of Honolulu was also underway. In 1908, under several separate appropriations, funds were authorized for a naval station at Pearl Harbor (\$2,000,000) [35 Stat. 141], a coastal artillery battery at Waikiki (\$50,000), and a calvary post in Honolulu (\$200,000). [35 Stat. 1004]

Progress, albeit slow, was also being made in the effort to get a Hilo federal building. In December 1908, the Hilo Board of Trade made a request to the United States Congress in the amount of \$150,000 for a federal building. An act of June 25, 1910 authorized \$25,000 "for the purpose of beginning the construction of a suitable and commodious fireproof building for the accommodation of the United States post-office, United States custom-house, United States courts, and other governmental offices" at a cost not to exceed \$200,000. The same act specified the division of the public land in Hilo: a portion would be used for the federal building and a portion would be restored as a public land of Hawaii. It further specified that, at no cost to the government, a new street would be constructed and the outstanding lease on the federal portion would be cancelled. The next section of that act authorized the acquisition of additional land to enlarge the site of the proposed federal building in Honolulu. The cost would not exceed \$350,000. [35 Stat. 696]

An act of March 4, 1911, under Sundry Civil Appropriations, provided for the commencement of the building in Hilo with an appropriation of \$100,000. It also provided that a private architect be selected to design the building. The Honolulu building was also appropriated \$150,000 for continu-

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ation under the present limit. [Both 36 Stat. 1373]

The Sundry Civil Appropriation Act of August 24, 1912 added another \$25,000 to the Hilo kitty. The following year's Public Buildings Omnibus Act of March 4th increased the spending limit on the site for the Honolulu building by \$100,000: \$325,000 was now available for the site. [37 Stat. 866] On October 22, 1913, a \$100,000 Urgent Deficiency Appropriation was granted Honolulu for site acquisition. [38 Stat. 210] Now \$580,000 was funded for Honolulu, yet the reality of a building under construction was still far away.

Hilo's building was also plodding along in a piecemeal fashion. The boosters of Hilo's building, however, could at least take comfort that, in contrast to Honolulu, a site was in hand and plans were drafted. The Sundry Civil Expense Appropriations of August 3, 1914 added \$25,000 for continuation and of March 3, 1915 added \$50,000 for completion. By that time the building was under construction. In March of 1916 the cornerstone was laid (apparently a cornerstone had been laid in the previous year by The Honorable Joseph G. Cannon, but that was not the real one). Scheduled for completion in late 1916, a series of delays postponed the opening of the building until March 1917. After seventeen years of waiting the citizens of Hilo could take pride in not only their magnificent new building, but also in the fact that they had beaten Honolulu in obtaining their new federal building. As reported in an April 2, 1917 article in the Pacific Commercial Advertiser:

At three o'clock last Friday afternoon the Hilo postoffice moved from its dilapidated, moss-covered shack at the foot of Waianuenue Street to its beautiful concrete and marble building on the federal site. The transfer from a hovel to a palace was the work of a few minutes.

...

Although every precaution had been taken to advertise in four languages that the old office was closed, a considerable amount of mail matter found its way into the deposit slits of the former building. Habit is too strong for some people, and during most of Saturday morning box holders were seen opening the old boxes at the foot of Waianuenue Street.

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Designed by Henry Davis Whitfield of New York, the three-story building of reinforced concrete is Neo-Classical in form. The open, colonnaded portico and Mission tile roof lend a Mediterranean flavor to the design.

In Honolulu, as construction began on the Hilo Federal Building, legislation was enacted by the Senate and House to sell the site that had been intended for the federal building. The act of March 3, 1915 provided that, in lieu of enlarging the site heretofore acquired, the site be sold for not less than \$165,000 and a new site be purchased. [38 Stat. 892] As the Hilo building was readied for opening, the site for the Honolulu building was finally purchased on January 15, 1917 for \$200,000. In 1918, the New York architectural firm York and Sawyer completed the plans for the building. The Sundry Civil Expense Appropriations bill of July 19, 1919 provided the final \$849,000 grant for the building. Finally, the May 1, 1922 issue of the Honolulu Advertiser announced the opening of the new building: "Honolulu's new postoffice premises in the recently completed federal building, facing on Palace Square, were christened Saturday night with a watermelon luau. The first course was watermelon, second course watermelon, on so on to the tenth." After more than a half century of operating in the "king's post office," the post office was housed in its "palatial new stand." Three stories in height and of reinforced concrete, the building is designed in the Spanish Colonial mode.

Both the Hilo and Honolulu federal buildings exemplify the ponderous and often lengthy process of piecemeal appropriations. Add to that the problems of obtaining the site and the intervention of World War I, as in the case of Honolulu, and two decades passed before the building was completed. In the 1920s the federal government continued to evaluate its process of meeting the demands for public buildings. This culminated in the Public Buildings Act of May 25, 1926 (also known as the Keyes-Elliott Act). This act expanded the scope of and consolidated the funding of post office construction. It set the groundwork for the massive federal building programs of the 1930s. Between 1931 and 1939, 1,584 post offices were constructed across the nation -- three times as many as had been constructed in the previous fifty years.

In response to the duties imposed by the 1926 Act, the House of Representatives issued House Document 710 (February

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14, 1927) to identify potential projects under the \$100,000,-000 allocation provided by the Act. The report recommended 278 projects, including 118 new buildings in towns which had not previously received federal buildings. In addition, the committee estimated a need for 2,311 public buildings across the nation and recommended another \$100,000,000 to expand the program. The report, however, only listed one project for Hawaii -- a custom house in Honolulu at an estimated cost of \$500,000.

This was followed, in the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act of May 29, 1928, by an appropriation of \$100,000 under a limit of \$400,000. House Document 613 (February 26, 1929), under projects proposed in the \$200,000,000 authorization, again listed the Honolulu custom house under a limit of \$400,000. In addition, \$400,000 was authorized for a new immigration station in Honolulu. This document did not provide for any new post offices in Hawaii but did increase the number of buildings to be constructed under the nationwide program to 571.

By the time the next House Document was issued on February 27, 1931, the Honolulu Federal Building had been expanded and remodeled. House Document 788, however, continued to list a \$400,000 authorization for the Honolulu Post Office. This had apparently been coupled with the previous authorization for a custom house in Honolulu in the expansion of the Federal Building. In addition, the program which had been expanded in the Document to \$415,000,000 plus \$89,000,-000 from the sale of existing buildings, listed a \$350,000 quarantine station and \$415,000 immigration station for Honolulu. Nationwide, 1,624 projects, including 1,085 buildings in places which had not previously received a federal building, were identified.

It was not until House Report 1879, issued on June 2, 1934, that any other Hawaiian city received hope that it would receive a federal building. Although Senator Charles A. Rice had been attempting to place Lihue on the list of favored communities since 1927 he had little luck. Now, at least, Lihue was included on the list of buildings for which funds had not yet been allocated but were pending. Both Lihue and Wailuku were included for sites and buildings at estimated costs of \$96,000. The proposed Honolulu quarantine station was listed as a remaining project for which funds had

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not been allotted.

Although Uncle Sam had been liberal in doling out funds for the military in Hawaii, he had held the purse strings tight for federal post offices, except in Honolulu. Honolulu received the addition to its federal building in 1930, in which over a million and a half dollars was now invested, but Hilo's building, which was termed a palace when it opened in 1917, was overcrowded and deteriorating. Further, no other Hawaiian community, not even the county governmental centers of Kauai (Lihue) and Maui (Wailuku), had received federal recognition. According to the 1930 census, Hilo's population had doubled since the completion of its federal building to 19,468. Honolulu reached a population of 137,582. Wailuku was Hawaii's third largest city with 6,998 residents. (Actually, Schofield Barracks on Oahu had 11,694 military personnel and dependents which would have made it Hawaii's third largest community.) Lihue trailed Lahaina, Wahiawa and Kapaa with 2,399 residents. Towns on the mainland of equivalent or smaller populations, particularly those that were seats of county government, had already received federally-constructed post offices

With hundreds of millions of dollars allocated to mainland projects, it was time that some of Hawaii's overcrowded post offices be replaced. The Maui News of February 9, 1929 reported that large increases in postal business had outgrown the Wailuku Post Office quarters that had been built in the Bank of Maui in 1919. Inspector W. H. Switzer had been instructed by Washington officials to advertise for suitable quarters which could be leased by the post office. In an August 1, 1931 article the Maui News reported that local postal receipts had increased by 80% in the past ten years, indicating prosperity for both the post office and city.

At least the Wailuku Post Office had a relatively new building in which to operate. The post office at Schofield Barracks, Uncle Sam's largest army post, was a "ramshackle shack." According to an article in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin of November 26, 1935, Schofield Barracks "...has the nation's worst postoffice."

The "building" has a long history. First of all a section of it was used as a barrack building for the first soldiers. When it became too rickety and leaky

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for them, it was converted into a shoe repair shops in old Leilehua now known as the upper post.

In 1919 it was inspected by army maintenance experts and condemned. But there was plenty of life in the old building yet. The postoffice department saw possibilities, removed it to Castner, now the Lower Post, and gave it a coat of paint, hoisted a business sign, "U.S. Postoffice, Schofield Barracks."

It was July 1936 when Delegate Sam King gave notice to Lihue residents that federal funds from a recent deficiency appropriations bill would be available for the long-sought federal post office. Two months later, King sent another wire that \$38,000 would be available under a Public Works Administration grant for a new federal courthouse in Lihue. In October, a site for the new post office had been selected and was being surveyed. In June 1937 a sketch of the proposed new post office was featured on the front page of the Garden Island. Instead of evoking community pride, the proposed building fomented community activism. By September 14th, as reported, the plans for the "cracker box" building had been withdrawn.

Meanwhile in Wailuku, the September 15, 1937 issue of the Maui News announced with headlines "Postal Officials Visit Island." Although the party, which included F. M. Williams, postoffice department engineer from Washington, denied that it was seeking a site for a new Wailuku post office, there was strong speculation that this was the purpose of the trip. In August, the House appropriations committee had approved the \$78,502,875 3rd deficiency bill which included a post office for Wailuku: it was expected that a site would soon be selected.

While the communities of Lihue and Wailuku were in the throes of getting their first federal buildings, the overdue expansion and rehabilitation of the Hilo Federal Building was underway. The one-quarter million dollar project added two three-story wings to the front of the building, forming a "U"-shaped peristyle. Designed in 1936 within the Office of Supervising Architect, the addition was completed by 1938.

On May 11, 1938 the Maui News reported that Delegate Sam King had conferred with WPA officials regarding the list of

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eligible Hawaiian projects in the public building program reported to the House in the recovery bill. King had asked the WPA to finance a post office at Wailuku at a cost of \$130,000. It would be the first building in the Territory to be so financed. He also mentioned that two other post office projects were approved, an \$85,000 post office at Kahului and an \$80,000 remodel of the Honolulu Federal Building. He further stated that Hawaii was assured over \$1,000,000 in WPA funds as soon as his legislation was approved. Finally, he requested that the House Naval Affairs Committee approve public works authorizations providing for approximately \$10,000,000 for projects in Hawaii. A Headline of May 15th, "Post Office Site Action Seen," introduced the news that Wailuku's new federal building was expected to be authorized by congress during the present session if the people of Maui could get together on a site that would meet with federal requirements with regard to cost. The local Chamber of Commerce would work on the matter. The June 8th headline, "Two Post Office Sites Picked," indicated that progress was being made. The committees representing the County of Maui and the Maui Chamber of Commerce had come to agreement on a primary and alternative site for their new federal building. In September, however, the process came to a halt when it was reported that "Choice Delayed in Site of New Wailuku P.O." (Honolulu Advertiser, September 8, 1938)

House Document 177, issued on February 2, 1939, listed the emergency construction projects that were either in process or being proposed. Seven projects were slated for Hawaii. Under authorized projects were the following: Hilo Federal Building expansion and remodel - \$252,000; Hilo U.S. customs warehouse - \$40,000; Honolulu quarantine station - \$182,500; Schofield Barracks Station (post office) - \$80,000; Lihue Post Office - \$95,000; and Wailuku Post Office - \$130,000. Projects that were not yet authorized with the proposed cost limits included the Honolulu Post Office remodel - \$80,000 and Kahului Post Office - \$85,000.

When contractor E.E. Black began work on the Lihue Post Office, the efforts of local civic leaders had already been successful: a building in keeping with the character of Lihue and the Hawaiian climate would be built. On May 9, 1939 the Garden Island reported that a large crowd witnessed the dedication of their new building. The same issue

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included an editorial stating that the twelve year effort to achieve the building had been worthwhile. It also recounted the efforts and gave praise to local residents: "To the credit of Kauai it refused to accept the monstrosity offered, and made a stern protest to Washington."

The "rickety shack" that served as post office for Schofield Barracks was finally replaced. The February 19, 1940 issue of The Honolulu Advertiser reported that the modern structure would be dedicated on February 21st. The \$70,000 building included "... all the most recent developments in postoffice building construction and replaces a ramshackled wooden building which has been in use for 21 years even though it was classed as a "temporary" building throughout its use." The building, of reinforced concrete with a mission tile roof, almost duplicated the building that had been recently completed in Lihue.

Several months later, the prospects for Wailuku's new federal building also appeared to brighten, when on June 19th The Honolulu Advertiser reported that two adjoining parcels on High and Wells street had been condemned for the post office. The site was finally purchased in 1941, but before work could begin an event at Pearl Harbor superceded all thought of a federal post office on Maui. (Incidentally, it was not until July of 1956 that the Senate approved \$757,000 for a new post office in Wailuki. The old post office on Main, that was overcrowded in 1929, lasted a few more years--until 1961 when the new building was finally occupied.)

In summary, Hawaii received only four federally-constructed post offices/federal buildings between 1900 and World War II. These include Hilo in 1917, Honolulu in 1922, Lihue in 1939 and Schofield Barracks in 1940. All of the buildings made use of reinforced concrete, a material that was used only sparingly in the West. It is also significant that Hawaii's first government-constructed post office was constructed of concrete block and poured concrete with steel reinforcing bars in 1871.

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The following information is the same for all the photographs listed.

1. Lihue MPO
2. Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii
3. Jim Kolva
4. March 1988
5. Negatives on file at USPS Facilities Service Center, San Bruno, CA

Photo No. 1 (negative #24)

6. View to southwest

Photo No. 2 (negative #8)

6. View to south

Photo No. 3 (negative #7)

6. View to southeast

Photo No. 4 (negative #4)

6. Wood sculpture in post office box lobby, Marguerite Blasingame, artist

Photo No. 5 (negative #1A)

6. Wood sculpture over postmaster's door, same artist

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**National Register of Historic Places
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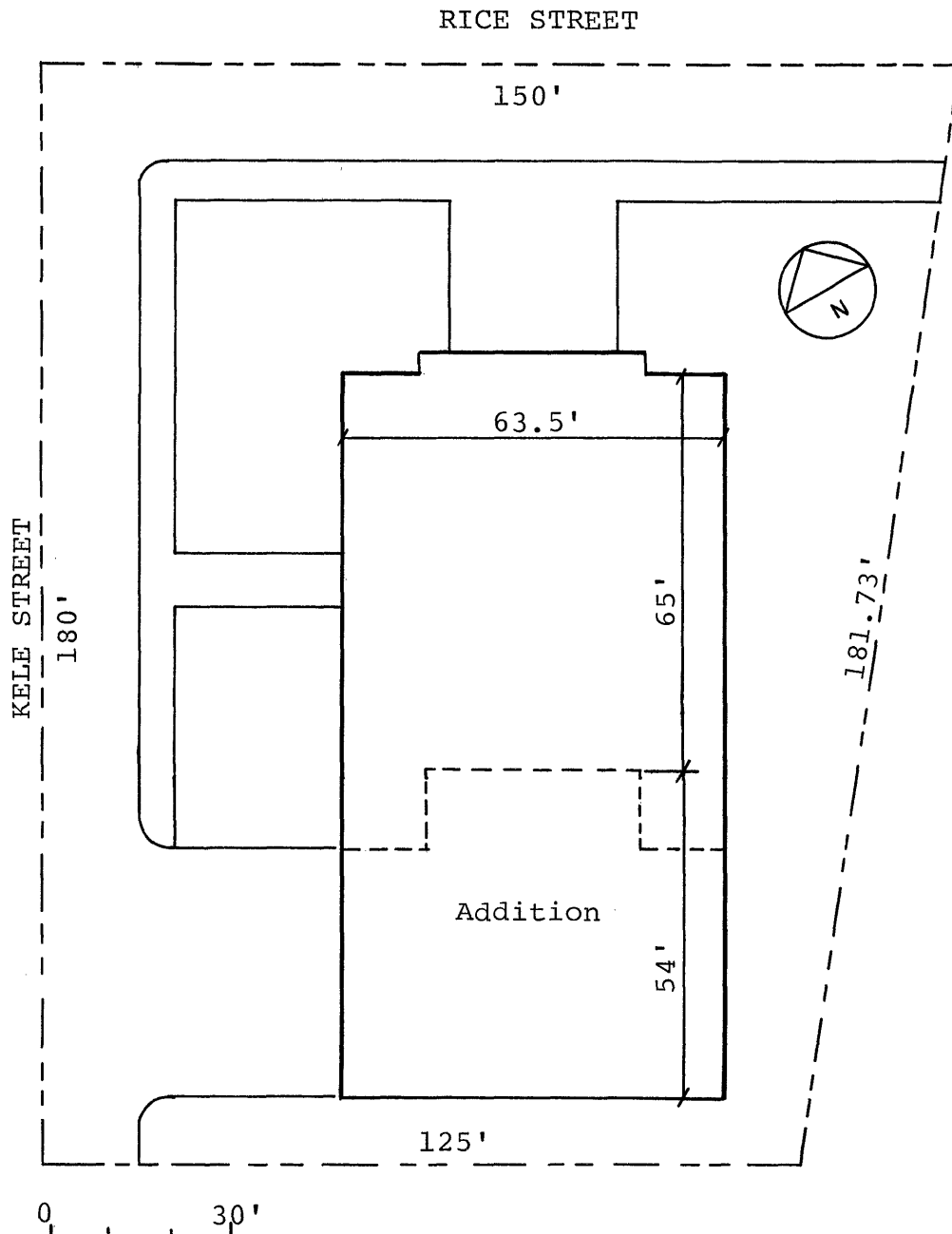
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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89002011

Date Listed: 11/28/89

US Post Office--Lihue
Property Name

Kauai
County

Hawaii
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Linda McClelland
Signature of the Keeper

11/28/89
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

The period of significance for this building was given as 1900-1941. Steven Stielstra of the USPS changed it to 1939 to reflect the building's date of construction. Criteria consideration G therefore no longer applies. The nomination is now officially amended to reflect this change.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)